



Jewish Telegraphic Agency

DAILY NEWS BULLETIN

660 FIRST AVENUE

NEW YORK 16, N.Y.

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Vol. XXXIII - 49th year

Friday, December 23, 1966

No. 24

SPAIN SEEKS VATICAN APPROVAL OF LEGISLATION ON FREEDOM OF RELIGION

MADRID, Dec. 22. (JTA) -- The legislation providing for freedom of religion in Spain for Jews and Protestants, endorsed by the Spanish College of Bishops and approved by a national referendum this month, will not be sent for passage to the Cortes, the Spanish Parliament, until it is endorsed by the Vatican, it was learned here today. The legislation, which has been in preparation for 10 years, has been scheduled to be placed before the Cortes on January 20.

Generalissimo Franco received yesterday the international president of the B'nai B'rith, Dr. William Wexler, and told him that he considered the legislation as a "simple act of justice." Dr. Wexler was accompanied by Saul E. Jofes, director-general of the B'nai B'rith office of international affairs. The two leaders also met with other high Spanish officials and suggested to them that they send an exhibit of the art of Spanish Jews to the United States.

The new legislation will allow Jews and other non-Catholics to worship openly in clearly-marked houses of worship, to form religious associations, to celebrate civil marriages and to be buried in their own cemeteries. Members of the non-Catholic faiths also will be free from obligatory attendance at Catholic services or teachings in Spanish schools, armed forces and prisons.